

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

In the claims

Claim 1 (currently amended): A spindle motor for use in a disc drive comprising a shaft supporting a thrust plate at one end thereof,
a sleeve surrounding the shaft and adjacent the thrust plate, the sleeve cooperating with the shaft to define a journal bearing ~~therebetween~~ between the sleeve and the journal bearing, and the sleeve cooperating with the thrust plate to define a fluid thrust bearing ~~therebetween~~ between the sleeve and the thrust plate,
a counterplate laser welded to said sleeve and located adjacent said thrust plate, the counterplate and the thrust plate being adapted to retain a fluid ~~therebetween~~ between the counterplate and the thrust plate,
the welded counterplate being adapted to contain fluid within the thrust bearing and the journal bearing.

Claim 2 (original): A spindle motor as claimed in claim 1 wherein the shaft is fixed and the sleeve and counterplate rotate relative to the shaft.

Claim 3 (original): A spindle motor as claimed in claim 2 wherein the sleeve supports a hub for supporting a disc for rotation about the shaft.

Claim 4 (original): A spindle motor as claimed in claim 1 wherein the shaft is free to rotate relative to the sleeve and counterplate.

Claim 5 (original): A spindle motor as claimed in claim 4 wherein the sleeve and counterplate are fixed to a base which supports the motor.

Claim 6 (original): A spindle motor as claimed in claim 5 wherein the shaft supports a hub for rotation over said base.

Claim 7 (original): A spindle motor as claimed in claim 6 wherein the hub supports one or more discs for rotation.

Claim 8 (currently amended): A spindle motor for use in a disc drive comprising

a shaft supporting a thrust plate at one end thereof,

a sleeve surrounding the shaft and adjacent the thrust plate, the sleeve cooperating with the shaft to define a journal bearing ~~therebetween~~ between the sleeve and the shaft, and the sleeve cooperating with the thrust plate to define a fluid thrust bearing ~~therebetween~~ between the sleeve and the thrust plate,

a counterplate ~~supported between~~ laser welded to upraised axial arms of said sleeve and located adjacent said thrust plate, the counterplate and the thrust plate being adapted to retain a fluid ~~therebetween~~ between the counterplate and the thrust plate,

means for containing fluid within the thrust bearing.

Claim 9 (previously presented): A spindle motor as claimed in claim 1 wherein said counterplate and said thrust plate define the fluid dynamic thrust bearing and the means for containing fluid comprise a counterplate welded to the upraised arms.

Claim 10 (cancelled)

Claim 11 (currently amended): A spindle motor for use in a disc drive comprising

a shaft

a sleeve surrounding the shaft cooperating with the shaft to define a journal bearing therebetween

a counterplate laser welded to upraised axial arms of said sleeve and located adjacent said thrust plate to define a fluid dynamic thrust bearing ~~therebetween~~ between the counterplate and the thrust plate,
the welded counterplate adapted to contain fluid within the thrust bearing.

Claim 12 (previously presented): A spindle motor as claimed in claim 11 wherein the shaft is fixed and the sleeve and counterplate rotate relative to the shaft.

Claim 13 (previously presented): A spindle motor as claimed in claim 12 wherein the sleeve supports a hub for supporting a disc for rotation about the shaft.

Claim 14 (previously presented): A spindle motor as claimed in claim 11 wherein the shaft is free to rotate relative to the sleeve and counterplate.

Claim 15 (previously presented): A spindle motor as claimed in claim 14 wherein the sleeve and counterplate are fixed to a base which supports the motor.

Claim 16 (previously presented): A spindle motor as claimed in claim 15 wherein the shaft supports a hub for rotation over said base.

Claim 17 (previously presented): A spindle motor as claimed in claim 16 wherein the hub supports one or more discs for rotation.